

OrdnanceReports

News updates from around the world



April 30, 2003



This publication is produced by the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps Communications Coordinator. The purpose of this publication is to provide Command Information materiel concerning world events and the U.S. military's role in those events. Ordnance specific events will be covered if appropriate. Direct your correspondence to Ed Starnes at 410-278-2415 (DSN 298-2415), or email edward.starnes@ocs.apg.army.mil.

Rumsfeld: U.S. seeks handover of Iraqi fugitives

by Matt Kelley

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) - Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, the highest-ranking U.S. official to visit the conquered Iraqi capital, told American troops Wednesday the Bush administration is using diplomacy to encourage countries to turn over Iraqi fugitives.

"My impression is some (countries) that were accepting them are no longer, which is a good start," Rumsfeld told a rally of U.S. troops at Baghdad airport, formerly called Saddam International.

He had previously accused Syria of allowing former members of the Saddam Hussein regime to cross its borders.

Rumsfeld praised the troops and said they have "unleashed events that will unquestionably shape the course of this country."

We want the Iraqi people to live in freedom so they can build a future where the Iraqi leaders answer to the Iraqi people rather than killing them," Rumsfeld said.

Rumsfeld visited a power plant south of Baghdad, one of three generating stations that U.S. forces helped restart after taking control of the capital. Officials from the Army Corps of Engineers said power has been restored to between 40 percent and 50 percent of Baghdad.

Officials said power also has been restored to the water system and to pumps in the sewage system but not to sewage treatment plants, so raw sewage was still being dumped into the Tigris River.

Rumsfeld drove to the power plant in a convoy of military vehicles. Iraqis gathered on the side of the road and waved, while other Iraqi civilians drove in vehicles alongside the convoy. Military officials said they were confident about security because of the 20,000 U.S. troops in the capital.

Earlier, the secretary, operating out of a palace once occupied by ousted President Saddam Hussein, promised Iraqis that the United States is eager to return the country to their control.

I am delighted to be able to visit Baghdad and your country and witness the liberation of your country," he said in a message taped for radio and television broadcast in the Baghdad area.



U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld speaks to reporters on his plane somewhere over the Atlantic Ocean April 26, 2003. Rumsfeld is traveling to the Persian Gulf and South Asia. A major purpose of the trip is to underline the commitment the United States has to ensuring that Afghanistan and Iraq do not descend into chaos or return to authoritarian rule. (AP PHOTO/Luke Frazza/Pool)

Rumsfeld said coalition forces are committed to helping restore order and basic services for Iraqis and help them form a new government.

He also called on Iraqis to tell coalition soldiers about former Iraqi officials and foreign fighters who might still be in their neighborhoods.

"Iraq belongs to you," he said "The coalition has no intention of owning or running Iraq."

The defense chief met in the presidential palace with Jay Garner, the retired Army general serving as civilian administrator of Iraq until a new government is up and running, as well as with U.S. military commanders.

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Commentary: Counting my blessings on a cool Mosul night

by Pfc. James Matise

MOSUL, Iraq (Army News Service, April 30, 2003) — Tonight I watched the sun set on the glowing Tigris River, and as I smelled the marshland water in the cool breeze that washed over me, I wondered if a few months ago, Saddam Hussein himself wasn't watching the same scene — I am sitting on his balcony, after all.

After months of vehicle hoods, tents and foxholes, the ground and concrete schoolhouse floors, nasty critters, stray dogs and sandstorms, I'm sleeping in a palace tonight overlooking the lights of Mosul.

It's incredible to look back. We've accomplished much in the past month of fighting. We've liberated a country, broken the back of a firmly established totalitarian regime, begun to provide for the masses and are teaching a nation how to stand on its feet. I've had so many experiences, seen and done so many exciting, strange and sometimes crazy things; I cannot begin to describe them.

Some might say we had a little luck; others would say the campaign was simply well planned. I couldn't say whether luck was a factor, but looking back, I see many things I am thankful for having happened:

For the successful campaign of the coalition forces, who freed the noble Iraqi people from 30 years of oppression in less than 30 days. The smiles and cheers of the resilient citizens I've met in An Najaf, Karbala, Baghdad and Mosul, and their iron will to learn how to support themselves without the Ba'ath Party infrastructure, are all the reasons I need for being here. For their happiness, their kind hospitality, the little girl who gave me a rose, I am thankful.

For the leadership of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), my fellow Screaming Eagles, who had little time to prepare but were still able to successfully orchestrate the unique capabilities we have so that we could participate in Iraq's liberation.

For the 3rd Infantry Division, whose tanks charged relentlessly across the Iraqi desert and set the fastest invasion pace ever seen. Behind them, the 101st Airborne Division was able to set up fuel

points that enabled our helicopter-heavy brigades to conduct combat air assaults and allowed our Apaches to strike deep into the ranks of the Republican Guard — helping us get home that much sooner.

For the Marines, especially for sticking it out at Al Nasiriyah, the bloodiest battle in the war with the possible exception of Al Basrah. The liberation of Nasiriyah will forever be preserved in their legacy, along with Okinawa and Tripoli. Semper Fi.

For the British, who fought bravely and successfully secured the Al Faw peninsula, averting ecological disaster, and liberated Al Basrah, although the Ba'ath Party intended to make its streets run with British and Iraqi blood alike.

For the Kurdish Peshmerga, who dared to enter the fight even after failing before and facing the wrath of Saddam Hussein, and for being victorious.

For the Air Force and the Navy, who took the skies over Iraq and whose bombing campaign swiftly cut off the regime's ability to communicate with its forces.

For the Iraqi soldiers who, faced with torture and death if they were caught, braved those risks and capitulated. Those who realized Saddam wasn't worth fighting for will live to participate in the building of a better Iraq. Their people owe them a greater debt of gratitude than they will ever know.

For the weapons of mass destruction that were not used, even though our intelligence said they would be. Perhaps they heeded our warnings, or perhaps we eliminated their capability to unleash them early on in the war. If it's the latter, the credit belongs to the Navy and Air Force for diminishing that capability. That they had such weapons is no longer a question.

For the Patriot missile batteries from the 11th Air Defense Artillery Division out of Fort Bliss, Texas. The new Patriot Advanced Capability 3 technology has been targeted with harsh criticism, but all I know is that it kept Iraqi missiles from hitting us.



U.S. soldiers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade walk in front of a group of Iraqi policemen in Kirkuk, northern Iraq, April 29, 2003. The retired general overseeing Iraq's postwar reconstruction said on April 30 that his fellow Americans should beat their chests with pride at having toppled Saddam Hussein without destroying the country's assets.

Troops fire on protesters in Iraq; mayor says two killed

by Niko Price, The Associated Press, published in European Stars and Stripes

BAGHDAD, Iraq — For the second time this week, U.S. soldiers fired on anti-American protesters Wednesday in the city of Fallujah; the mayor said two people were killed and 14 wounded.

President Bush planned to speak to the nation later this week to announce that major combat in Iraq had ended.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld became the first top Bush administration official to visit Iraq since Saddam Hussein's ouster.

Bush, to deliver his speech Thursday night from the returning aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln while it was still at sea, would neither declare victory nor declare the war to be over, said White House press secretary Ari Fleischer.

Rumsfeld told U.S. troops at Baghdad's airport: "We want the Iraqi people to live in freedom so they can build a future where the Iraqi leaders answer to the Iraqi people rather than killing them."

He also taped a broadcast message to Iraqis saying the United States is eager to return the country to their control.

Rumsfeld told the troops that the Bush administration is using diplomatic efforts to encourage countries to turn over wanted Iraqis to U.S. authorities, and that some nations are no longer taking in fugitives.

The shooting in Fallujah, 30 miles west of Baghdad, occurred less than 48 hours after gunfire during a demonstration Monday night that hospital officials said killed 13 Iraqis.

About 1,000 people marched down the city's main street Wednesday to protest the earlier incident, stopping in front of a battalion headquarters of the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne Division — a former office of Saddam's Baath Party.

American officers at the scene, and U.S. Central Command in Qatar, said U.S. soldiers in the compound and in a passing convoy opened fire in response to rock-throwing and gunfire.

"The evildoers are deliberately placing at risk the good civilians," said Lt. Col. Tobin Green of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment. "These are deliberate actions by the enemy to use the population as cover."

During the march, and for hours afterward, U.S. Apache attack helicopters circled the site, barely skimming the tops of the tiled-roof minarets of Fallujah's mosques.

Fallujah's mayor, Taha Bedaiwi al-Alwani, said two people were killed and 14 wounded, and he asked for an investigation and compensation for the victims. He added that U.S. soldiers have



In the second such incident this week, U.S. troops fire on demonstrators today in Fallujah, killing two and wounding 14. An Army officer said the soldiers were shot at, and then returned fire. (AP photo)

been asked to stay away from mosques, residential areas and other sensitive places; the Americans agreed to study the request.

"Many people believe these are occupying forces. And many of them are still cautious until they see their intentions," said al-Alwani, a former Iraqi exile and opponent of Saddam's regime.

Local officials in Fallujah — a conservative Sunni Muslim city and Baath Party stronghold — said they saw or heard no shooting from among the protesters.

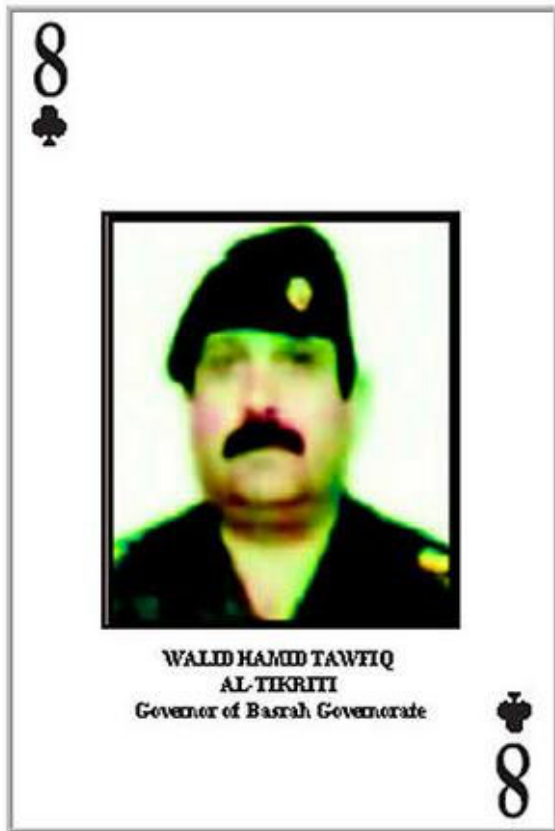
The incident, coupled with the deaths Monday outside a school in Fallujah, are increasing tension as American forces try to keep the peace in Iraq and win the trust of its people.

U.S. officers met with Fallujah's mayor and local Muslims clerics in hopes of averting further violence. Several dozen demonstrators clustered angrily outside the town hall where the talks took place; "Get out, get out," some chanted.

Emerging from the meeting, the imam of the Grand Fallujah Mosque, Jamal Shaqir Mahmood, said the Americans insisted the U.S. troops were needed to provide security, "but the people of Fallujah told them we already have security."

In the incident Monday night, U.S. Central Command said paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne were shot at by about 25 armed civilians mixed within an estimated 200 protesters outside a compound troops were occupying. Demonstrators said no gunfire came from their ranks.

Rumsfeld, nearing the end of a trip to several Persian Gulf countries, flew to Baghdad after joining a British commander, Maj. Gen. Robin



Amir Rashid Muhammad al-Ubaydi, the Iraqi oil minister, speaks in this Wednesday, Sept. 13, 2000 file photo. It was reported Tuesday April 29 2003 that Amir Rashid Muhammad al-Ubaydi has surrendered to coalition forces. In a brief statement issued from Camp As sayliyah in Qatar, the US Central Command said Al-Ubaydi, who was listed as No. 47 on the coalition's list of the 55 most-wanted, surrendered Monday April 28 2003 and was in coalition custody. (AP Photo/Jassim Mohammed/Files)

Wahid Hamed Tawfiq al-Tikriti, the former governor of southern Basra province, as he appears on the "eight of clubs" in the set of playing cards issued by the US military authorities to help capture the most wanted leaders of President Saddam's former regime. Al-Tikriti, a member of Saddam Hussein's clan and one of the Iraqis on the U.S.-led coalition's most-wanted list, surrendered and is in custody, the exile Iraqi National Congress said Tuesday, April 29, 2003. (AP Photo/HO)

Troops fire on protesters in Iraq; mayor says two killed continued

Brims, for a briefing in Basra on military operations in southern Iraq.

"A number of human beings have been liberated and they are out from under the heel of a vicious, brutal regime," Rumsfeld said.

"I'm very pleased that the United States and the United Kingdom worked so well together."

In Baghdad, Rumsfeld said coalition forces are committed to restoring order and basic services for Iraqis and helping them form a new government. He asked Iraqis to tell coalition soldiers about former Iraqi officials and foreign fighters who might still be in their neighborhoods.

Rumsfeld also met with Jay Garner, the retired Army general serving as civilian administrator of Iraq until a new government is established.

One of the unresolved issues confronting U.S. officials is whether Saddam's regime did in fact possess illegal weapons of mass destruction, as the Bush administration contended.

U.S. officials said Tuesday that high-ranking Iraqis now in custody are uniformly denying that Saddam's government had any biological, chemical or nuclear weapons. The officials said they believe many of the prisoners are lying to protect themselves.

American officials stand by their belief that Iraq possessed prohibited weapons and the means to make more. They have suggested that the weapons were well hidden or destroyed shortly before the war.

In London, British Prime Minister Tony Blair predicted Wednesday that those who believe Saddam possessed no weapons of mass destruction will be left "eating some of their words" when the banned arms are found.

"I am absolutely convinced and confident about the case on weapons of mass destruction," Blair told the House of Commons.

In other developments:

¶ Coalition forces have taken custody of the former governor of Basra after he surrendered to the anti-Saddam Iraqi National Congress in Baghdad, U.S. Central Command confirmed Wednesday.

Walid Hamed Tawfiq al-Tikriti, a member of Saddam's clan, surrendered Tuesday. He was No. 44 on the U.S. military's most-wanted list of 55 Iraqi officials.

¶ Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, in a speech, said imposing foreign political standards on Iraq would not necessarily lead to democracy, or lessen fanaticism, in the Arab and Islamic worlds.

He said those advocating such changes are "intentionally ignoring ... that Arab nations are working hard to achieve democracy according to their own standards."

"We reject the philosophy of imposing democracy by force," Mubarak said.



U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld (L) speaks with Major General Robin Brimms, Commander of the British land forces, during a visit to the southern Iraqi city of Basra April 30, 2003. Rumsfeld later flew to Baghdad and told the Iraqi people U.S.-led forces wanted to help them make the transition from “tyranny to freedom” and then leave. Reuters photo.

Rumsfeld: U.S. seeks handover of Iraqi fugitives continued

Garner told reporters Americans should be proud of the quick military victory in Iraq. “I was planning on having the oilfields torched and facing a huge humanitarian crisis, but the oilfields were not torched and there is no humanitarian crisis,” said Garner.

Lt. Gen. David McKernan, commander of the coalition land forces that took Iraq, also drew an optimistic scenario. “For every one thing that doesn’t look right or smell right, there are 10 things going well,” McKernan said.

Rumsfeld planned to visit an electricity generating plant south of Baghdad that coalition forces helped restart after the war. Garner said about half of Baghdad has electricity.

Rumsfeld and his party flew to Baghdad after a stopover in the southern city of Basra where he met with British Maj. Gen. Robin Brims, commander of the forces that gained control of the city, Iraq’s second largest.

“A number of human beings have been liberated and they are out from under the heel of a vicious, brutal regime,” Rumsfeld said prior to his meeting with Brims. “I’m very pleased that the United States and the United Kingdom worked so well together.”

Brims said he, too, was delighted at how well U.S. and British forces worked together.

“There are exceptional capabilities that your military bring that we are very envious of,” Brim said.

The defense secretary’s visit to Iraq came the day after he announced

that U.S. troops in neighboring Saudi Arabia will leave that country by the end of the summer, marking a major shift in the American military presence in the Persian Gulf.

The United States will all but abandon Prince Sultan air base at a remote desert base south of the Saudi capital of Riyadh.

Only about 400 U.S. troops will remain in the Muslim kingdom, most of them based near Riyadh to train Saudi forces, American officials said Tuesday.

Rumsfeld and Saudi Defense Minister Prince Sultan said the pullout is because, with the war won in Iraq, forces are no longer needed to patrol the old no-fly zone over southern Iraq.

About 100 U.S. planes now remain at the Saudi base, down from about 200 during the height of the Iraq war. All will be gone by the end of August.

Part of Rumsfeld’s mission in the Persian Gulf region this week is to talk to American allies about rearranging U.S. military forces in the area after the Iraq war.

The United States also has troops in the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Kuwait, which Rumsfeld also visited this week, as well as Bahrain and Oman.

The defense secretary has said he wants to have fewer troops in the Persian Gulf after all operations in Iraq are complete. That process could take years, however. Rumsfeld also has said the United States does not want permanent access to bases inside Iraq.

International terrorism falls, U.S. says

by Barry Schweid

WASHINGTON (AP) - Terror attacks around the world declined sharply in 2002 and the number of anti-U.S. attacks dropped as well, the State Department reported Wednesday.

The United States again branded seven countries - Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Syria and Sudan - as sponsors of terrorism. Cofer Black, who heads the department's counterterrorism office, said steps would be taken to remove Iraq from the list now that President Saddam Hussein's government has been overthrown.

"It's legally difficult to take them off the list," Black said, but Secretary of State Colin Powell "is recommending that steps be taken to do it."

Meanwhile, Cuba, which remained on the list, was accused of sending agents to U.S. missions around the world to provide false leads designed to subvert investigations into the Sept. 11 attacks against the United States, the report said.

With the drop-off in attacks around the world, Powell said "unprecedented progress has been made across the international community."

In releasing the annual report, he said that "with every passing month the campaign has intensified," and that for terrorists still on the loose, "life has definitely become more difficult."

But, Powell said, "We cannot and will not relax our resolve, our efforts, our vigilance."

Iran was designated as the most active supporter, with its supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, referring to Israel as a "cancerous tumor," while Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and Ministry of Intelligence and Security assisted Lebanese Hezbollah and Palestinian rejectionist groups including Hamas, the annual report said.

Iraq's ties to terror groups, which the Bush administration cited as one of its reasons for going to war to remove President Saddam Hussein, included laying the groundwork for possible attacks on the United States and other Western countries, the report said.

Syria, which Powell is due to visit this week, permits some terror groups to maintain headquarters or offices in Damascus and helps Iran supply Hezbollah via Damascus, the report said.

But the Syrian government insists the offices are involved only in political and informational activities, the report said.

Powell has said he would talk to President Bashar Assad about Syria's support for terror and U.S. allegations that it helped Iraq with military technology and did not stop Syrian fighters from joining the war against the U.S.-led coalition.

In 2002, there were 199 terror attacks worldwide, a drop of 44 percent from the 355 attacks recorded in 2001. A total of 725 people were killed last year, far below the 3,295 - including thousands in the Sept. 11 attacks in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania - who died in 2001.

Attacks on the United States declined from 219 to 77. The drop was due mainly to a falloff in pipeline bombings in Colombia - from 178 to 41.

Thirty U.S. citizens, including seven at a resort in Bali, Indonesia, five at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and Daniel Pearl, the Wall Street Journal's South Asia bureau chief, in Pakistan, were killed in 2002.



U.S. Secretary of State, Collin Powell, addresses the media Wednesday, April 30, 2003, at the State Department, in Washington, about the 2002 report on global terrorism. Powell cited 725 deaths from around the world linked to terrorism in 2002.(AP Photo/Lawrence Jackson)

The American victims included a hiker and a missionary in the Philippines, two American diners in a West Bank pizzeria, two attending church services in Islamabad, Pakistan, three people at a missionary hospital in Yemen, and Laurence Foley, an administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development in Jordan.

The bombings in Bali in October which killed 202 people, mostly foreign tourists, was the deadliest terror attack since the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States.

In Africa, simultaneous attacks on a commercial airliner and a hotel in Mombasa, Kenya, in November were cited as dramatic evidence that sub-Saharan Africa continues to suffer from terror.

For the first time, Greece arrested members of the deadly November 17 group, the State Department said, in a significant step against domestic terrorism.

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FLOWERS FOR THE TROOPS — Children from the Kuwaiti Public Authority of Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources hand out flowers and mugs to coalition service members to show their appreciation for the support of Operation Iraqi Freedom at Camp Commando, Kuwait. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Maj. Kathleen A. Hoard

DoD announces U.S. Army Europe facilities returned to Germany

The Department of Defense today announced that U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR) will partially close the Giessen General Depot, Germany, and return its other facilities in Giessen, Friedberg, Butzbach, Wetzlar and Bad Nauheim in fiscal 2006-2008 as part of the U.S. Army's Efficient-Basing East project.

The closures will be completed incrementally during that timeframe as brigade combat team assets are consolidated at one location. The concentration of assets at one site will enhance both training and deployment readiness by putting six battalion-sized units adjacent to their major training area. Termed "Efficient-Basing East," the project is in keeping with the Army's goal to station a brigade combat team on a single installation and deploy a brigade combat team anywhere in the world.

As such, the facilities in and around Giessen were identified as excess to the needs of the U.S. Army in Europe for military operational reasons.

In fiscal 2006, the MacArthur Family Housing Area in Friedberg, the George Gershwin Family Housing Area in Wetzlar and the Alvin York Village Family Housing Area in Bad Nauheim will be returned to Germany.

In fiscal 2007, operations at the Ray Barracks in Friedberg, the Friedberg Training and Storage Area, Schloss Kaserne in Butzbach and the Roman Way Village family housing area will end.

In fiscal 2008, facilities in Giessen, including Pendleton Barracks,

the John F. Dulles Village Housing Area, the George C. Marshall Village Family Housing Area and the Giessen Military Community Facilities will be closed. Operations at the Butzbach training area and range will terminate in 2008 as well. Also in fiscal 2008, the partial closure of the Giessen Depot will occur.

As a result of these closures, USAREUR will inactivate the 284th Base Support Battalion and local elements of the 104th Area Support Group after completion of the move in fiscal 2007 and 2008.

Overall, the closures will impact approximately 3,400 soldiers and some 5,000 family members. A total of approximately 270 U.S. appropriated fund civilians, 140 U.S. nonappropriated fund personnel, and 230 local national civilians will be affected.

U.S. military operations at the retained portion of the Giessen Depot will be the Army and Air Force Exchange System (AAFES) distribution center and engineer support center. The AAFES distribution center currently employs about 26 U.S. civilians and some 500 local nationals. The Engineer Support Center employs about 12 U.S. civilians and 45 local nationals. Military officials determined the depot remains the most efficient site for these operations in terms of its location and extensive warehouses. The engineer support center, an element of Installation Management Agency, Europe Region, is the central administration and distribution point for both issued family housing furniture and unaccompanied personnel housing furnishings throughout the command.

Rule changes mean bigger paychecks for thousands of troops

by Jon R. Anderson, Stars and Stripes

Paychecks just got fatter for tens of thousands of troops in and around the Iraqi combat zone.

A slew of newly expanded and — and in most cases retroactive — special pays will provide a hefty war bonus for those directly supporting the war effort, as well as those serving in the Balkans in recent months.

Under previous rules, combat zone special pays and tax exclusion already covered those deployed to Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Bosnia and Kosovo. Now, two new countries and a big chunk of the Mediterranean Sea have been added to the tax-exclusion club while existing countries will see increases in one or more special pays.

Here's how it breaks down:

Combat Zone Tax Exclusion: Military personnel in Turkey, Israel and those deployed to water areas of the Eastern Mediterranean that lie east of 30 degrees east longitude are now eligible for combat

U.S. forces in S. Korea to be realigned into two major hubs

Stars and Stripes

SEOUL — U.S. military forces in South Korea will be realigned and consolidated into two major hubs, a senior U.S. official said Friday.

Maj. Gen. James Soligan, U.S. Forces Korea deputy chief of staff, said the hubs will be at Osan, south of Seoul, and the Taegu/Pusan region in the southern part of the peninsula, according to South Korean news reports.

Soligan was out of the country and unavailable for comment Monday. A USFK spokesman declined to comment on the reports.

“There is a long-term vision that has most of the U.S. forces located in the Osan/Pyongtaek area,” Soligan was quoted as saying in the Korea Times. “There are clearly discussions going on, but no decisions have been made. That's a long-term objective.”

He said the two nations would have to come to an agreement before land is purchased and construction begins, according to the Times. Soligan's comments follow early April “Future of the ROK-US Alliance Policy Initiative” meetings between U.S. and South Korean officials.

The officials agreed to move forces from Yongsan Garrison “as soon as possible” but gave no timeline. The 630-acre post, which sits in the middle of Seoul and is host to three military commands, has for years drawn the South Korean public's ire.

On April 12, the Korea Times reported that Yongsan Garrison would be moved to Osan. USFK officials released a statement criticizing the paper for publishing an “inaccurate article.”

zone tax exclusion. The effective date for the tax relief is Jan. 1 for Turkey and Israel. For those in the eastern Med, the effective date is April 11.

Hardship Duty Pay: All of Iraq, Israel and Kuwait have been designated Hardship Duty Pay locations effective March 31. Troops in Iraq and Kuwait receive \$100 a month, while those in Israel receive \$50 a month. Under the old rules, only Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and areas outside Kuwait City were designated HDP locations within those countries.

Imminent Danger Pay: Also known as Hostile Fire Pay, IDP has been bumped up to \$225 per month, a \$75 increase retroactive to Oct. 1, 2002. The Mediterranean Sea is also now designated an IDP area, joining Turkey, Israel and the vast majority of Middle East and Balkan nations where U.S. troops serve.

Family Separation Allowance: FSA has also been boosted from \$100 to \$250. The increased monthly stipend enjoyed by most troops on duty in the Middle East and Balkans is also retroactive to Oct. 1.

The new increases have provided for some surprising Leave and Earning Statements for many. Just ask Sgt. 1st Class James Kelley, with the 106th Finance Battalion in Würzburg, Germany, home of the 1st Infantry Division.

“We've been getting a lot of questions from soldiers who served in Kosovo,” he said. Troops on a six-month peacekeeping rotation there from April to November 2002, for example, were already getting \$150 for Imminent Danger Pay and \$100 for Family Separation Allowance.

Those soldiers are now seeing an extra \$450 in their paychecks for the two months they were deployed under the new rules. “They think it's a mistake because they're not deployed anymore, but the new rules are retroactive so they're owed two months under the increased pay.”

Meanwhile the new tax exclusion rules are also good news for the thousands of troops serving in Turkey and Israel.

The exclusion covers all pay for enlisted and warrant officers, said Navy Cmdr. Karen Brady, a senior quality of life policy official for U.S. European Command. All other officers, however, must begin paying taxes on any pay over the highest enlisted pay rate. In 2002, that rate was \$5,532.90 per month, and in 2003 the rate is \$5,882.70 per month, which means it largely only affects lieutenant colonels and above.

Any hostile fire remains tax free regardless of pay scale.

Brady also explained why the Pentagon put different effective dates for the new additions.

“The different effective dates between the Mediterranean, and Turkey

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Ashcroft hails homeland security efforts

WASHINGTON (AP) - Attorney General John Ashcroft said Wednesday the nation is better protected from terrorism since creation of the Department of Homeland Security, but conceded that coordination among federal agencies "is not perfect."

Noting that the department has been running for over a month under the leadership of Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge, Ashcroft said, "We are going toward an improved system to better protect."

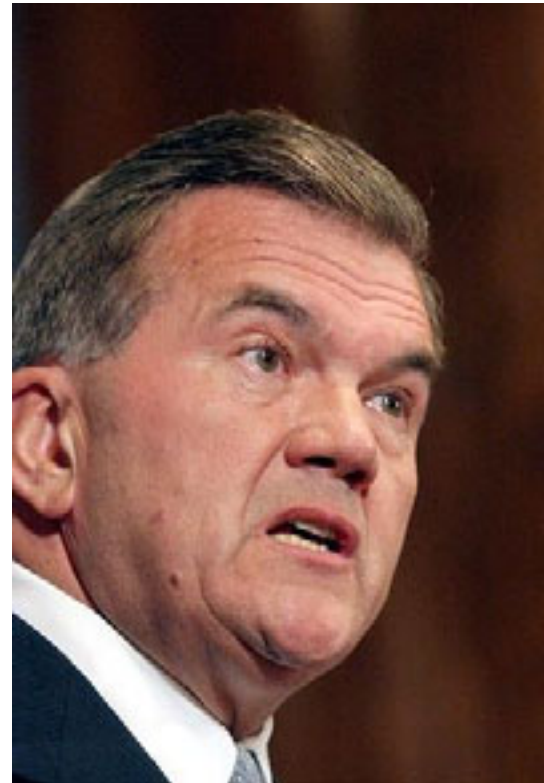
Appearing on ABC's "Good Morning America," the attorney general was asked about a congressional report criticizing the coordination of terrorist watch-list information among nine component agencies in the new department.

A General Accounting Office study concluded that nine such agencies have not yet ironed out problems in the coordination of information about terrorist suspects, The New York Times reported in Wednesday's editions. It said the GAO report cited bureaucratic

and technological obstacles.

"The cooperation has improved dramatically," Ashcroft told ABC. "But it is not perfect. And that's why the president called for the Department of Homeland Security."

"We are much better protected than we have been," he said, "but there are ways for us to improve and the report will provide us a roadmap for continuous improvement in this respect."



Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge discusses homeland security during a luncheon address at the National Press Club in Washington Tuesday, April 29, 2003. (AP Photo/Gerald Herbert)

Rule changes mean bigger paychecks for thousands of troops continued

and Israel are due to the fact that the eastern Mediterranean was not approved for Imminent Danger Pay until April 11, 2003, and IDP is a prerequisite for combat zone tax relief. Turkey and Israel were already receiving IDP. Since tax relief can be made retroactive, we were able to get a January 1, 2003, effective date whereas policies on IDP do not allow retroactivity," said Brady in a EUCOM statement.

Officials expect the tax exclusion for Turkey and Israel will end no later than Oct. 1.

Tax exclusion covers the following pays:

- * **Active-duty pay earned in any month they served.**
- * **Imminent danger pay or hostile fire pay.**
- * **Military pay earned while hospitalized as a result of wounds, disease or injury incurred in the combat zone.**
- * **A re-enlistment bonus if the voluntary extension or re-enlistment occurs in a month served in a combat.**
- * **Pay for accrued leave earned in any month served in the combat zone (DOD must determine that the unused leave was earned during that period).**
- * **Pay received for duties as a member of the Armed Forces in clubs, messes, post, and station theaters and other non-appropriated fund activities earned in a month served in a combat zone.**
- * **Awards for suggestions, inventions, or scientific achievements because of a submission made in a month in a combat zone.**

International terrorism falls, U.S. says continued

The evil of terrorism continues to plague the world, but Afghanistan was liberated from Taliban rule and al-Qaida expelled as "the global war against terrorism was waged intensively with encouraging results," said Black, the department's counterterrorism coordinator.

"Al-Qaida terrorists are on the run, and thousands of them have been detained," he said in a statement. "More than one-third of al-Qaida's leadership has been killed or captured."

More than 165 countries have issued orders freezing more than \$121 million in terrorist-related financial assets, the report said.

The seven countries listed as sponsors of terror are banned from receiving U.S. weapons, barred from U.S. economic aid, and effectively prevented from receiving World Bank loans.

In Africa, simultaneous attacks on a commercial airliner and a hotel in Mombasa, Kenya, in November was cited as dramatic evidence that sub-Saharan Africa continues to suffer from terror.

Powell encourages Congress to ratify entries of 7 countries into NATO

by Rudi Williams, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, April 29, 2003 – Secretary of State Colin Powell asked Congress today to approve protocols that would welcome seven new members into NATO, which would be the alliance's largest expansion in its 54-year history.

Appearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Powell strongly encouraged the committee to ratify NATO entry for Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

"It's the central organizing force in a great web of relationships that holds North America and Europe together," Powell told the senators.

"It represents a community of common values and shared commitment to democracy, free markets and the rule of law."



He pointed out that on Sept. 12, 2001, the day after terrorists attacked the nation, the alliance told the world that it regarded attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon as attacks on all NATO members. This, he said, shows that NATO has the will to combat terrorism and to address the new threats the world faces.

"But the alliance must also have the means," Powell said. "So it must transform, militarily and politically, to secure our collective defense."

Having seven new members "will revitalize NATO by expanding its geographic reach, enhance its military capabilities," he noted.

"We must not forget that the seven invitees also bring tangible security assets to the alliance," the retired Army general said. "Enlargement will bring more than 200,000 additional troops into the alliance and extend NATO's reach from the Baltic to the Black Sea, both politically and geographically."

"And the new members will make the alliance stronger, and they will bring fresh ideas and energy to it," Powell emphasized. "I'm pleased to report that all seven invitees are already de facto allies in the war on terror. All of them have contributed to stabilization efforts in Afghanistan through Operation Enduring Freedom and the International Security Assistance Force."

For more than a half a century, NATO has been indispensable to security on both sides of the Atlantic, the secretary noted, "meeting the security challenges in a world of diverse threats, multiple challenges and unprecedented opportunities."

Powell called the West's triumph in the Cold War and defeat of Soviet communism "a victory for freedom and democracy." But "the troubles and tragedies of the past decade" have ushered in new threats, from ethnic cleansing in the Balkans to terrorist attacks on Sept. 11." To deal with them, he continued, the United States will continue to rely on NATO in the future.

The former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff told the committee "the door to NATO will remain open. Prague was not the end of the enlargement process, just one step on the way. We welcome the applications of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia and other future applicants as well."

During the question- and-answer session, Powell was asked about comments by Marine Gen. James Jones, chief of U.S. European Command, about potential bases and training areas in Eastern Europe. He responded that "it's very sensible as the alliance has enlarged itself, moving to the east, to take a look at a base structure that was created in the '50s."

He said during his term as Joint Chiefs chairman, "We reduced the size of our forces in Europe from

310,000 down to roughly 100,000 to 150,000. A lot of bases went away." But the base structure remained as "the armed forces of the United States along the Iron Curtain ready to fight the Soviet Union."

"Most of those nations we were ready to fight are now a part of NATO," Powell noted. "So it's sensible to take a look at the base structure – not with the intent of how do we get closer to the Russian federation. That's not the point at all."

"Anybody who thinks we're somehow creeping back up to a new Cold War line, that's not it at all," he said. "It's just sensible to see whether there are other places where we should have facilities, which is a better term than 'bases.' We need facilities that will allow us to move more quickly to other parts of the world."

Quoting Jones, Powell said, "We're looking not for re-creation of Fort Hood, Texas, in Bulgaria or Romania. But perhaps a forward facility where you can use it when you need it for exercise or transit purposes."

In response to another question, Powell pointed out that President Bush, Prime Minister Blair and other members of the coalition said the United Nations has a vital role to play in Iraq.

"We're hard at work now trying to structure what that role should be and how best to get U.N. endorsement of the role we think is appropriate," the secretary said. "We have some ideas of what we think the U.N. should do with respect to the lifting of sanctions against Iraq, the endorsement of an interim authority and an endorsement of our presence."

"There is a major role for the U.N. to play, and they're playing a role already on humanitarian grounds," Powell noted. "The World Food Program and other U.N. agencies are working with the coalition now."

But he said it's important for the U.N. to go beyond the humanitarian role and get into an endorsement role with the participation of a representative of the secretary general.



Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld speaks to US troops at Baghdad's International Airport, Wednesday, April 30, 2003. Rumsfeld is visiting the Persian Gulf region and will make other undisclosed stops as well. (AP Photo/Luke Frazza, Pool)

Happy Birthday Ordnance Corps! 191 Years of Service to the line, on the line, on time.

A look at how past wars ended

by the Associated Press

Some past wars and how they ended — or didn't:

—Revolutionary War: The end of the war began when British Major Gen. Charles Cornwallis surrendered more than 8,000 of his men on Oct. 19, 1781, after suffering a crushing defeat at the hands of American and French forces. The Treaty of Paris, which recognized the independence of the United States, was signed two years later on Sept. 3, 1783.

—Civil War: Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered on April 9, 1865, to Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House, Va. Other Confederate forces surrendered over the next several weeks, with the last turning themselves in on May 26.

—World War I: The war ended on Nov. 11, 1918, when Germany accepted armistice terms set forth by the Allies, and agreed to leave the territories taken during battle and to surrender large numbers of arms, ships and other war materials. The Treaty of Versailles was signed near Paris on June 28, 1919.

—World War II: Japan agreed to end the war on Aug. 14, 1945, a week after Americans dropped the first atomic bombs on Hiroshima

and Nagasaki, killing more than 100,000 people. The war officially ended with Japan signing the surrender terms in ceremonies aboard the USS Missouri.

—Korean War: An armistice signed July 27, 1953, ended the fighting, and Korea was divided between north and south, along the 38th parallel. A permanent peace treaty has never been signed.

—Vietnam: The war in South Vietnam ended April 30, 1975, with the government's surrender to the Communists, and after Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops entered the capital of Saigon, now called Ho Chi Minh City. Hours before the capital fell, the United States airlifted out all Americans remaining in Vietnam.

—Persian Gulf War: President George H.W. Bush announced Feb. 27, 1991, that allied forces had liberated Kuwait and would suspend military operations against Iraq. Iraq agreed to the cease-fire and accepted nearly all the allies' terms to end the fighting.

—Terrorism/Afghanistan: The war continues.

—Iraq War: President Bush to announce during a national address Thursday that major combat in Iraq has ended.

U.S. general: groups supply Afghan rebels

by D'Arcy Doran

BAGRAM, Afghanistan - Renegade groups in Iran and Pakistan are providing a lifeline to rebels who continue to menace U.S. forces in Afghanistan's lawless border regions, a top U.S. commander warned Tuesday.

Despite international efforts to choke off terrorists' funding, supporters in neighboring countries are succeeding in getting cash and weapons over Afghanistan's rugged mountains, Maj. Gen. John R. Vines told reporters.

"I think there are renegade elements in Iran who have an interest in controlling a portion of Afghanistan," Vines said. "I think there are elements in Pakistan - not the government - that have an interest in creating instability."

Vines spoke after a ceremony which for the first time brought combat operations by U.S. forces and its allies under the same command as all other coalition activities.

Vines, commander of 82nd Airborne Division forces in Afghanistan, handed control of combat missions to Lt. Gen. Dan K. McNeill, the overall commander of coalition troops in the country.

As commander in charge of the coalition combat missions over the past nine months, Vines has studied Afghanistan and its terrain. He knows well what dangers lurk in its mountains and valleys.

A firefight on Friday killed two U.S. soldiers under his command. Another two U.S. Special Forces soldiers died last month in an ambush by rebel fighters.

Vines, who is staying on as McNeill's deputy, said streamlining the command did not mean fewer combat missions. But Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said last weekend he would discuss declaring an end to Afghanistan as a combat zone with Afghan leaders and U.S. military officials.

Rumsfeld was due in the Afghan capital Kabul on Sunday, but was delayed. Currently on a trip to the Persian Gulf, he is now expected in Afghanistan later this week.

Whatever declarations are made, Vines said rebels in parts of Afghanistan would remain a serious threat.

"In certain parts, the country is stable. In other parts, it's terribly dangerous," Vines said. "That has not changed and that probably won't change in the foreseeable future."

Holdouts from the Taliban regime, fugitives from the al-Qaida terrorist network and followers of renegade rebel leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar can assemble small groups of fighters who can kill or injure coalition troops and civilians, he said.



One of a group of newly-trained police officers kisses his national flag during a parade to celebrate their liberation from the communist regime in front of the ruins of buildings destroyed by warlords, Monday, April 28, 2003 in Kabul, Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Amir Shah)

He insisted his appraisal didn't run counter to Washington's moves toward changing the status of its Afghan mission. "It's not a disconnect at all," he said. Militants in any country may occasionally succeed in overpowering authorities in isolated cases, he said.

Terrorists' support from allies in neighboring countries was one of the major obstacles that has kept coalition forces from eliminating the rebels, he said.

The shadowy benefactors are motivated by a combination of tribalism, religious zealotry, a share of Afghanistan's lucrative opium crop and - in some cases - raw power, Vines said.

"The one thing that makes this extraordinarily complicated is all of those factors are in play here," he said.

Unfortunately for the coalition and the country's fragile interim government, if there was ever an ideal country for fomenting unrest it's Afghanistan, he said.

"If you had to design an area to support an anti-government movement, you might describe an area like this," Vines said. "Multiple borders, extreme distances, lack of road infrastructure, high mountains, weak central government, areas where there are religious or tribal (conflicts) ... it applies absolutely right here."

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North Korea features fearsome military

by George Gedda

WASHINGTON (AP) - It is a country with 1.17 million military personnel, the world's fifth largest. Its air force has more than 1,700 aircraft and the navy more than 800 ships.

For all of the fuss about North Korea's spent fuel rods, reprocessing capabilities, plutonium stocks and other trappings of its nuclear weapons program, the country's conventional forces are fearsome as well.

An account of the North's overall capacity was provided to the Senate Armed Services Committee in March by Gen. Leon J. LaPorte, commander of the U.S. military in Korea.

LaPorte said North Korea's ground force is the world's third largest, with almost 1 million active duty soldiers and an estimated 6 million reserves.

"About 70 percent of the North Korean Army is deployed south of Pyongyang, where they are capable of attacking with very little tactical warning," he said. "The preponderance of the North Korean long range artillery force can strike Seoul from its current location."

Indeed, Seoul's proximity to the Demilitarized Zone that separates North and South Korea is a major worry for the South Korean government and its American partner. Still, the South Korean army of about 600,000 soldiers is far more technologically advanced and better trained than North Korea's. And the South has 37,000 U.S. troops permanently based there to back them up.

As LaPorte noted, Chairman Kim Jong Il has a "military first" policy, meaning that all other budget items must take a back seat to the armed forces. About a third of the country's national wealth is devoted to the military, leaving almost everything else starved for funds. Even so, the military lacks the fuel and other resources it takes to train as regularly as the U.S. and South Korean forces.

North Korea is heavily dependent on outside donations - especially from the United States - for food. Harald Maass, a German reporter who visited North Korea, told a conference in South Korea in March that "what we saw was an emaciated country on the brink of a breakdown."

But the military thrives, at both the conventional and unconventional levels, according to LaPorte.

"North Korea maintains a substantial chemical weapons stockpile and a production capability that threatens both our military forces and civilian population centers in South Korea and Japan," he said.

In addition, he said, North Korea has the capability "to develop, produce and potentially weaponize biological warfare agents."

Beyond that, LaPorte said North Korea continues to produce and deploy medium-range missiles capable of striking cities in the western United States and Japan.

"Continued research on a three-stage variant of these missiles will

provide North Korea the capability to target all of North America," LaPorte said.

The most benign explanation for all this comes from Daniel Pinkston, a Korea expert at the Monterey Institute for International Studies.

The North Koreans, he said, "believe they are under threat, they are very insecure, and they view the threat as coming from the U.S."

As a basis for the North's insecurity, he cites the administration's National Security Strategy report, issued last year.

It said the United States must be prepared to stop North Korea and other "rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the United States and our allies and friends."

At present, the administration's focus is on North Korea's nuclear programs. At a U.S.-North-Korea-China meeting last week in Beijing, Pyongyang's chief delegate, Ri Gun, offered to scrap his country's nuclear weapons programs and missiles in return for large-scale assistance as well as security guarantees.

It is not clear how any North Korean promise to eliminate its nuclear weapons program would be verified. Locating forbidden weapons in post-Saddam Iraq has not been easy; one can only imagine what weapons sleuthing would be like in security-obsessed North Korea.

For starters, the United States has no idea where the North's uranium-based nuclear weapons program is. Officials are better informed about its plutonium-based program.

Lack of trust infects the relationship. Can a country with a "military first" policy be trusted to disarm, officials ask, especially after having ignored previous commitments not to arm itself in the first place?

EDITOR'S NOTE: George Gedda has covered foreign affairs for The Associated Press since 1968.



A North Korean soldier stands guard on the north side of the truce village of Panmunjom in the demilitarized zone, north of Seoul April 30, 2003. North Korea strongly implied in public on Wednesday it had deployed nuclear weapons and accused Washington of using the North's comments on atomic bombs at talks last week as a "mean trick" to hinder progress. The State Department says North Korea told U.S. negotiators at the talks in Beijing that Pyongyang had nuclear weapons, something U.S. intelligence has long suspected.



An Army officer gestures as he distributes medicine to Iraqi people in Baghdad on Wednesday. Alexander Zemlianichenko / AP photo

Purported Saddam letter urges uprising against occupation

by Salah Nasrawi

CAIRO, Egypt (AP) - A purported letter from Saddam Hussein published Wednesday in an Arabic-language newspaper in London urges Iraqis to "rise up" against occupation.

Al-Quds Al-Arabi, which has taken a pro-Saddam editorial line and blamed the Iraqi people for the toppling of the Iraqi leader, did not say how it obtained the letter attributed to Saddam, a copy of which was published on page 3.

Neither the handwriting nor the signature appeared similar to other written documents attributed to Saddam, but Al-Quds Al-Arabi said "sources close to Saddam" confirmed both were genuine.

The paper said the sources could not disclose more details "due to security considerations and circumstances surrounding his whereabouts."

"Rise up against the occupier and do not trust those who talk about Sunnis or Shiites," said the letter dated Monday - Saddam's 66th birthday. "The only issue for your great Iraq now is occupation.

"There is no priority but to drive the infidel, criminal and cowardly occupier out. No hand has extended to him but those of the traitors and stooges."

Al Quds Al-Arabi published a letter Tuesday from a previously unknown group calling itself Iraqi Resistance and Liberation that claimed Saddam was still alive and would deliver a message to his country within three days.

Saddam was targeted by cruise missiles March 20 in the opening

salvo of the war. As U.S. troops converged on the capital, an American jet dropped "bunker buster" bombs on a group of houses in the al-Mansour neighborhood April 7 after Saddam was reportedly seen in the area.

A number of Iraqis claim to have seen Saddam and his son Odai in the nearby Azamiyah district two days later - an appearance that was videotaped and broadcast by Abu Dhabi television. Some U.S. officials dispute the authenticity of that tape.



South Korean tourists visit a check point next to the truce village of Panmunjom between the two Koreas, north of Seoul, Wednesday, April 30, 2003. North Korea said Wednesday that it would regard any U.S. move to seek U.N. sanctions against the communist country as "the green light to a war." (AP Photo/Vincent Thian)

Analysis: White's departure as Army secretary was only a matter of time

by Lisa Burgess, Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — Army Secretary Thomas White's abrupt resignation Friday may have caught some parts of the Army staff flat-footed, but Army watchers say the good-bye was a given: the only unknown was its timing.

Like a cat with the proverbial nine lives, White came close to losing his job several times since he was appointed in May 2000. His troubles began with his status as President Bush's highest-ranking appointee to be associated with the Enron scandal, extended to the Crusader cancellation, and recently culminated with a public spat regarding the number of U.S. troops it might take to secure Iraq in peacetime.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, who allegedly has a special intolerance for "underlings who go off the reservation ... has been aching to get rid of [White], but the timing just hasn't been right," a Pentagon official said Monday.

Circumstances always seemed to come up that would have made it politically awkward for Rumsfeld to fire White outright — the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, Afghanistan, Iraq.

Now, with the war in Iraq a success and the combat phase all but wrapped up, the timing was apparently right.

White tendered his resignation after meeting with Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz on Friday, hours before Rumsfeld left for a trip to the Middle East.

"His resignation was asked for before [Rumsfeld] took off," the official said.

Although White's bruising public battles with Pentagon leadership were splashy and memorable, they are not the only legacy of his tenure as Army secretary, according to John Grady, a spokesman for the Association of the United States Army (AUSA).

"I think he did a lot of good," Grady said in a Monday telephone interview from the association's Arlington, Va., offices.

White "worked very, very vigorously to make sure the Army set aside funds" for the Future Combat System, the service's "transformational" technology architecture, Grady said.

White also "really worked the Stryker issue," pushing to make sure the wheeled armored combat vehicle stayed on schedule and met its developmental milestones on time, Grady said.

But perhaps White's most enduring legacy, Grady said, "is the rapprochement he [fostered] between the uniformed and the civilian side" of the Army.

"White really loves soldiers, and they knew it," Grady said. "He was always happiest when he was with the troops."

Some media reports have characterized White's departure as a firing, while others refer to it as a resignation, but it doesn't really matter, Army observers and officers said.

"I think he was catching the hints," one former Army officer who works closely with the service said dryly in a Monday telephone interview.

The big question now is who will replace the long-beleaguered former Enron executive.

Central Command leader Gen. Tommy Franks is the widely favored front runner for the Army's top uniformed position, chief of staff, which will be open when Gen. Eric Shinseki retires in June. But no names have publicly been floated for White's replacement.

Rumsfeld is likely to have, if not an outright successor to White, at the very least a short list of names already prepared.

Rumsfeld "wouldn't have gotten rid of White unless he had a replacement in mind," the former officer said.

Service secretaries, unlike chiefs of staff, are often more political appointments than they are strategic. Some presidents have used the service secretaries almost like ambassadorships, offering the posts to campaign supporters with little or no government experience.

But with Rumsfeld at the helm, that's highly unlikely to be the case with the Army spot, especially since Rumsfeld now has an opportunity to form a handpicked triangle at the top of the service: the secretary, the chief and the chief's second-in-command.

Rumsfeld is almost certain to tap a person with whom he has worked before, either in his former life as a CEO or in one of his many reincarnations as a political appointee in Washington, Army watchers said.

Most important of all, Rumsfeld "is going to pull someone from the outside, someone who understands his transformation strategy and who [Rumsfeld] thinks can push [transformation] down into the Army," the former Army officer said.





SOCCER BALLS & GIRL SCOUT COOKIES— Lt Col. Dave Long, Sgt. 1st Class T. Bucci and Maj. Phil Osterli, 3rd Civil Affairs give soccer balls and girl scout cookies to the head instructors at the newly renovated Umm Qasr High School in Iraq, April 24, 2003. 3rd CAG is in Iraq for support in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Operation Iraqi Freedom is the multinational coalition effort to liberate the Iraqi people, eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and end the regime of Saddam Hussein. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Maj. Kathleen A. Hoard



FAREWELL AFGHANISTAN — Soldiers assigned to Coalition Task Force 82, of the 82nd Airborne Division, salute while standing in formation April 29 during an inactivation ceremony. The task force soldiers held a ceremony casing the colors, adding closure to their tour of duty here at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan. The soldiers are packing up their belongings to head home to Fort Bragg, N.C. U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Milton H. Robinson.



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